

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 AID-05
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 FDRE-00 PA-01 PRS-01
USIA-06 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /088 W
-----064080 251339Z /43

R 250840Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6872
INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN N Y
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1848

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UNHCR, AG
SUBJECT: SAHARA REFUGEES: UNHCR DISCOURAGED WITH ALGERIAN
POSITION

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFF JULY 23 AND
24, UNHCR'S ALGIERS REPRESENTATIVE GHASSEN ARNAOUT NOTED HIS
DISCOURAGEMENT AND FRUSTRATION WITH ALGERIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS
UNHCR AND ITS EFFORTS TO AID SAHRAOUI REFUGEES. ALGERIAN
FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH IS UNHCR'S PRIMARY CONTACT IN GOA,
APPARENTLY PARALYZED BY LONG-AWAITED MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL,
AND ARNAOUT'S CONTACTS THERE PROFESS TO BE ABLE TO DO NO-
THING MORE THAN SET UP FILES FOR THEIR SUCCESSORS. MORE
SPECIFICALLY, ARNAOUT'S PROBLEMS ARE:

A. NO ACTION ON AGREEMENT WITH WORLD FOOD PROGRAM:
ALGERIANS, ARNAOUT SAID, HAVE STILL NOT SIGNED AGREEMENT
WITH WFP FOR SUPPLYING FOODSTUFFS TO REFUGEES, AND THERE
IS NO SIGN THAT THEY INTEND TO DO SO.

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B. DEPUTY UNHCR REP DENIED ACCESS TO TINDOUF:
ARNAOUT'S NEW DEPUTY, FANTANA (FNU), HAS NOT RECEIVED
PERMISSION TO VISIT TINDOUF IN SOUTHWEST, NEAREST TOWN
TO CAMPS, AND ARNAOUT DOUBTS THIS AUTHORIZATION WILL BE
GIVEN. UNHCR'S PLAN HAD BEEN FOR FANTANA TO LIVE THERE,
AND GOA'S ACTION THEREFORE MAKING LIFE VERY DIFFICULT
FOR ARNAOUT.

C. NO ACTION ON CENSUS: AFTER INITIAL FAVORABLE REACTION, GOA SHOWS NO SIGN OF APPROVING UNSYG WALDHEIM'S PROPOSAL FOR UNHCR TO CONDUCT CENSUS OF REFUGEE CAMPS. ISSUE HIGHLY CHARGED POLITICALLY, IN ARNAOUT'S VIEW.

D. "UNITING OF FAMILIES" PROPOSAL CAUSES SPARKS TO FLY: ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS HOME OFFICE, ARNAOUT RAISED WITH ALGERIANS MOROCCAN PROPOSAL THAT YOUTHS WHO FLED SAHARA IN SPRING OF 1976 BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THEIR PARENTS WHO HAD REMAINED BEHIND. IDEA WAS FOR UNHCR TO CONTACT YOUTHS, WHOSE NAMES HAD BEEN FURNISHED BY MOROCCANS, TO SEE IF THEY WISHED TO RETURN. ALGERIAN PRIVATE REACTION WAS PREDICTABLY VIOLENT, ARNAOUT SAID, ALTHOUGH BEYOND REFUSAL TO PERMIT UNHCR TO CONTACT YOUTHS, GOA MADE NO OFFICIAL COMMENTS.

2. FUNDAMENTAL DILEMMA, ARNAOUT INDICATED, IS THAT ALGERIANS WISH TO HAVE UNHCR PRESENT FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES BUT DO NOT ALLOW IT TO PLAY ANY ROLE IN DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF SUPPLIES. ALGERIANS AND POLISARIO ARE USING SUPPLIES MADE AVAILABLE BY UNHCR AND OTHERS, NOTABLY SCANDINAVIANS, TO MEET BASIC NEEDS OF REFUGEES, AND POLISARIO ENTIRELY RESPONSIBLE FOR DISTRIBUTION IN CAMPS, DIVIDED INTO "PROVINCES" OF EL AYOUN, SMARA AND

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DAKHLA, WHERE POLISARIO HAS IN EFFECT CREATED STATE WITHIN STATE. DIFFICULTY FOR UNHCR IS THAT IT CAN GIVE NO ACCOUNTING OF WHAT HAPPENING, AND IS THEREFORE VULNERABLE TO MOROCCAN CHARGE THAT SUPPLIES BEING USED TO AID POLISARIO WAR EFFORT RATHER THAN TO MEET REFUGEE NEEDS. THIS SITUATION UNFORTUNATE, ARNAOUT SAID, BECAUSE MISERY IN CAMPS AS GREAT AS EVER.

3. WITH RESPECT TO US PARTICIPATION IN RELIEF EFFORT, ARNAOUT SAID HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OFFICIALLY THAT WE HAD DECIDED TO MAKE CONTRIBUTION THROUGH WFP. HE PROMISED TO SEND US COPY OF MESSAGE HE HAD RECEIVED TO THIS EFFECT.

4. ARNAOUT SAID THAT HIGH COMMISSIONER PRINCE SADRUDDIN HAD SUMMONED HIM TO GENEVA FOR REVIEW OF SITUATION. PRINCE, ARNAOUT NOTED, HAD BEEN AT LIBREVILLE FOR RECENT OAU SUMMIT AND, WITH WALDHEIM, HAD DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH BOUMEDIENE. ARNAOUT CHARACTERIZED BOUMEDIENE'S ATTITUDE AS TOUGH, AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT NEITHER HE NOR SADRUDDIN SAW MUCH PROSPECT OF EARLY SOLUTION. ARNAOUT PROMISED

TO CONTACT US AGAIN FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO ALGIERS
IN EARLY SEPTEMBER.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE STATUS OF OUR
DELIBERATIONS ON POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO SAHARA REFUGEES
AND IN PARTICULAR, WHETHER WE HAVE DECIDED TO CONTRIB-
UTE THROUGH WFP.HAYNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Concepts: REFUGEE RELIEF, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PFOR, SREF, PORO, AG, SS, UNHCR
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